

REMARKS:

Careful consideration has been given to the Official Action of April 6, 2007 and reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been amended to distinguish more clearly over the cited art.

Claims 13 and 14 have been added. Support for claim 13 can be found, for example, at page 11, line 26. Claim 14 is supported, for example, by original claims 1, 5, and 7.

Claims 1-14 as now presented are clearly distinguished over Gambini as will be explained hereafter.

Claims 1-12 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Gambini (EP 0898096).

As discussed in Applicant's previous response filed on January 16, 2007, Gambini (EP 0898096) discloses a transmission in which both the clutch actuating device and the speed regulating device are constituted by a single unit having a plurality of loose weights (22) which are contained inside a piston chamber and act on a push member (piston 23). Since there is only one set of weights (22), Gambini cannot distinguish between first and second speed threshold values and perform the accompanying operations as claimed. In fact, the weights 22 of Gambini start to exert axial force on piston 23 once the speed is sufficient to "centrifuge" the weights to the outer area of the piston chamber as shown in the bottom

part of the figure of Gambini. In other words, the distance between discs 3 and 4 must increase in order to engage the clutch. Consequently, the clutch engagement and the adjustment of width between discs 3 and 4 occur at the same speed.

In contrast, as recited in claim 1, the claimed invention provides an actuating device which connects the drive pulley to the flywheel when an angular speed value of the input shaft is greater than a first threshold value; and a speed regulating device which is active only when the angular speed value of the input shaft is greater than a second threshold value; the second threshold value being higher than the first threshold value. It should be noted that the first and second threshold values are determined by the two separate sets of weights, i.e. the auxiliary weights (48) and the main weights (68), which are recited in claims 5-7, and the new claim 14. This is clearly distinguished from the single set of weights of Gambini.

Furthermore, since Gambini cannot distinguish between first and second speed threshold values, it *a fortiori* does not define a first speed threshold value and a second, higher speed threshold value as required by the claimed invention. The first speed threshold value is now recited in new claim 13.

Additionally, as now recited in claim 1, the push means exerts an axial thrust on the first half-pulley through a force transmitting path not including the second half-pulley. The first half pulley, as defined in the claims, is the "fixed" half pulley referenced "6a" in the drawings, i.e., the pulley that remains axially fixed during speed regulation. The result of this arrangement is that a greater torque can be transmitted at start-up, i.e. when maximum torque

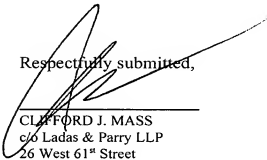
is required.

In contrast, the “push means” of Gambini (piston 23) acts on the movable half pulley (4), which is movable to adjust the ratio. In Gambini, both the clutch engagement and the speed variation step are performed by the same device (piston 23) which acts on the movable half pulley 4. Consequently, the clutch is engaged via an axial force that is transmitted from the mobile half pulley to the fixed half pulley indirectly through the belt.

It is noted that the Examiner did not indicate how Claims 5-7 and 10-11 are anticipated by Gambini. These claims are dependent directly or indirectly from claim 1, and are directed to features which are clearly not disclosed in Gambini. Therefore, these claims are clearly distinguished over the cited reference for at least the reasons discussed above.

In view of the above actions and comments, it is respectfully submitted that the application as now presented is in condition for allowance and early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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